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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: August 25, 1978 - 5:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Ignacio Lozano, Mr. Edward Seaton, Mr. John R. Higgins, and Jerry Scott

PLACE: Home of John R. Higgins, CPAO

SUBJECT: Meeting at home of CPAO with Lozano and Seaton

SUMMARY: Messrs. Lozano and Seaton on August 23 met with Minister of the Interior General de Division Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy and obtained permission to visit Jacobo Timerman that afternoon at 3:00 p.m.

Their Observations

Lozano and Seaton were cordially received by Harguindeguy. Their request to see Timerman was greeted with what they described as enthusiasm. The Minister explained in answer to their question, that Timerman was being held without charges while an investigation is being conducted by CONAREPA to determine alleged "violations of patrimony" in the Valpiño Corp. of which David Graiver and Timerman were the major stockholders. The Minister explained to Lozano and Seaton that Graiver and Timerman each owned 45 percent of the Valpiño stock. After Graiver's disappearance, Timerman announced the stockholders' meetings in an obscure newspaper and through manipulation acquired 96 percent of the stock. Harguindeguy said that Timerman's citizenship has been revoked. And, as soon as he clears up his financial problems he can leave for Poland, Russia, Israel; or any country that wants him. Harguindeguy also stated that the government has 1,500 persons under arrest. He said that although they have no specific charges on many of them, they know that they are subversives and, therefore, have them in detention. The Minister was apparently very open about his remarks concerning censorship. He said, "they didn't want stories published on subversive forces, or stories that divide the military." He was very interested in the IAPA meeting next year and expressed a desire to personally welcome the IAPA delegates to Buenos Aires. The Minister also said that the Opinion newspaper is the most popular paper among the military.

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While with Timerman, Lozano and Seaton were told that he "did not know that his citizenship had been revoked." Furthermore, Timerman said that he would not request permission to leave the country, but "if they tell me I can leave I will go." He also said that if he left immediately, he would put his belongings in the hands of his lawyer who could clear up his finances for him. Timerman expressed the thought that his problem is in being a Jew. Lozano reported that Timerman is looking in good health. He is able to receive visitors, however, when people come to visit his family he must retire to a back room. His two sons are also with him at present. His wife may be leaving the country soon. Her health and general state appear to be worse than her husband's. Timerman said he hadn't seen a dentist in a year and a half, although an optometrist has been allowed to visit him.

Lozano and Seaton also met with Rabbi Myer. When they informed the Rabbi that Timerman's citizenship had been revoked, the Rabbi "got very excited and said he could line up a foreign passport right away. "Myer also suggested that Ambassador Castro visit Harguindeguy 'to pin him down' concerning the CONAREPA investigation, since a 'CPA's report could serve as evidence.'" Lozano mentioned Vance's statement that "two accountants in two days could conclude the investigation." Myer said that "he had sources in high places that say the report is finished but they're holding it." The Rabbi wants a press conference to put pressure on (CONAREPA) the commission to complete the report. Myer told Lozano that if Timerman would request asylum in Israel, the Israeli Ambassador in Argentina would attempt to get his release.

Lozano and Seaton agreed that they would recommend that the IAPA meeting take place in Argentina next year, but would not act on the suggestion by Raul Kraisselburg to nominate Bob Cox of the Herald to be committee host.

Lozano and Seaton also discussed their meeting with Harguindeguy and Timerman with Diane Page (UPI) and Juan de Onis of the New York Times.

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